

FROM THE MAGAZINE RACK NO. 86  
TERRI KEEFE

JUNE 23, 1976

WHO'S WHO IN APPALACHIA (THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY)  
DO NEWS REPORTS BIAS JURIES? (COLUMBIA  
JOURNALISM REVIEW)  
REBIRTH OF THE BOARDS (NEWSWEEK)

ANNCR: HERE IS \_\_\_\_\_ WITH FROM THE MAGAZINE RACK... VOICE  
OF AMERICA SUMMARIES OF ARTICLES ON TIMELY TOPICS FROM  
AMERICAN MAGAZINES. TODAY, A REPORT FROM THE COLUMBIA  
JOURNALISM REVIEW ON HOW THE NEWS MEDIA CAN AFFECT THE  
OUTCOME OF JURY TRIALS; NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE'S LOOK AT  
THE REBIRTH OF AN OLD SPORT -- SKATE BOARDING; AND FIRST,  
FROM THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, THE STORY OF A NEW REFORM  
MOVEMENT AMONG THE COAL-MINERS OF APPALACHIA.

VOICE  
ONE: APPALACHIA IN THE EASTERN UNITED STATES IS A MOUNTAINOUS  
COAL-MINING REGION OF NINETEEN MILLION PEOPLE THAT RUNS  
FROM SOUTHERN NEW YORK TO NORTHWESTERN MISSISSIPPI. IT  
WAS IN THE NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT IN 1960 WHEN THE POVERTY  
OF MANY OF ITS COAL MINERS BECAME AN ISSUE IN THE  
PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN. THEN, AFTER A SPURT OF DIRECT  
FEDERAL AID FOR THE REGION, THE NATION'S ATTENTION  
FADED. BUT TODAY THE ENERGY CRISIS HAS SWUNG THE  
SPOTLIGHT BACK TO THE COALFIELDS OF APPALACHIA. AND  
NOW THE REGION IS GAINING A STRENGTH IT HASN'T FELT  
BEFORE. WASHINGTON COLUMNIST COLMAN MCCARTHY ANALYZES  
THIS MOVEMENT IN THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY. HE DESCRIBES ITS  
IMPACT ON THE APPALACHIAN TOWN OF CLAIRFIELD, TENNESSEE:

VOICE  
TWO:

"THE TOWN IS ONE OF A STRING OF MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES ALONG A RURAL HIGHWAY. I'VE BEEN VISITING CLAIRFIELD REGULARLY EVERY OTHER YEAR SINCE NINETEEN SIXTY-SIX TO LEARN ABOUT THE MOUNTAIN CULTURE AND TO TALK WITH THE PEOPLE ABOUT THEIR BURDENS AND GOALS. ON MY LATEST VISIT TO THE AREA, THE POSTMISTRESS OF CLAIRFIELD HAD GOOD NEWS: THIS YEAR SHE IS DELIVERING MAIL TO ALMOST FIVE HUNDRED MAILBOXES ON HER RURAL ROUTE -- A FORTY PERCENT INCREASE FROM NINETEEN SIXTY-NINE. NOW THIS MAY MEAN LITTLE TO THOSE BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS, BUT AMONG THE CITIZENS OF CLAIRFIELD -- USED TO SEEING THEIR YOUNG PEOPLE FLEE -- IT SUGGESTS A TURNAROUND."

VOICE  
ONE:

THE POPULATION INCREASE IN CLAIRFIELD IS REFLECTED THROUGHOUT THE REGION: A GROWTH OF MORE THAN SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND IN FIVE YEARS. BUT MORE IS INVOLVED HERE THAN JUST AN INCREASE IN NUMBERS. MEN AND WOMEN IN APPALACHIA, MR. MCCARTHY WRITES, ARE FIGHTING TO PREVENT THEMSELVES -- AND THEIR CULTURE -- FROM BEING DEFEATED.

VOICE  
TWO:

"IT'S NOT THE GOVERNMENT THEORISTS IN WASHINGTON WHO ARE SHAPING THE NEW SELF-REGARD, BUT THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES. THIS ISN'T THE KIND OF GREAT PROTEST DRAMA THAT GETS ON THE TELEVISION NETWORKS. IT'S A SLOW UNDAUNTING OF IDEAS AND FEELINGS AND IT'S NEWSWORTHY PRECISELY BECAUSE IT HAS MUCH OF THE SUBSTANCE THAT WAS LACKING WHEN APPALACHIA WAS 'DISCOVERED' IN THE EARLY NINETEEN-SIXTIES."

VOICE  
ONE:

ACCORDING TO MR. MCCARTHY, THE CURRENT SIGNS OF RENEWAL  
COME JUST WHEN THEY MAY BE MOST NEEDED. HE SAYS THE  
UNITED STATES IS ENTERING "THE SECOND COAL AGE" --  
A RUSH TO SAVE AMERICA FROM THE ENERGY SHORTAGE. COAL  
SUPPLIES EIGHTEEN PERCENT OF THE NATION'S ENERGY NEEDS RIGHT  
NOW, BUT THOSE NEEDS ARE EXPECTED TO JUMP ONE-HUNDRED  
PERCENT IN THE NEXT TEN YEARS. AND MR. MCCARTHY FEARS  
THAT IF THE CITIZENS DON'T PROTEST, UNHEALTHY PATTERNS  
OF THE PAST COULD CONTINUE.

VOICE  
TWO:

"THE TRAGEDY OF APPALACHIA -- THE FACT THAT LITTLE OF THE  
VAST MINERAL WEALTH HAS BEEN RETURNED TO THE CITIZENS --  
HAS BEEN WELL DOCUMENTED. IN FACT, MANY OUTSIDERS ARE  
DETERMINED THAT IT WON'T HAPPEN ELSEWHERE. THE PHRASE  
'DON'T APPALACHIANIZE THE WEST' HAS BECOME A CRY TO  
PREVENT THE ENERGY COMPANIES FROM RAVAGING THE COAL-  
RICH WESTERN STATES WITH STRIP MINES (SURFACE MINES).  
AND THE APPALACHIAN PEOPLE ARE ALSO FIGHTING BACK FOR  
THE FIRST TIME."

VOICE  
ONE:

NOBODY KNOWS WHERE THIS PROTEST WILL LEAD OR WHETHER IT  
WILL HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE TEN YEARS FROM NOW. BUT  
COLMAN MCCARTHY IS CERTAIN THAT PLACES LIKE CLAIRFIELD,  
TENNESSEE HAVE MORE PEOPLE TODAY THAN EVER BEFORE WHO  
DARE TO DEFY THE COAL COMPANIES. ONE OF THOSE DARERS  
IS LEWIS LOVE -- A RETIRED AND DISABLED COAL MINER.

VOICE  
TWO:

MR. LOWE SPENT FORTY-FIVE YEARS IN THE DEEP MINES. HE WAS TRAPPED TWICE, HAD SOME RIBS CRUSHED AND HIS LEFT FOOT CRIPPLED. THOSE ARE HIS PHYSICAL INJURIES -- BUT HIS SPIRIT HAS BEEN ASSAULTED, TOO. THE CAUSE OF HIS MENTAL ANGUISH IS THE STRIP MINING IN THE MOUNTAIN, JUST UP THE CREEK FROM HIS HOUSE. WHEN THE STRIP MINERS RELEASE WATER FROM THE COAL PITS, IT FLOODS THE CREEK -- CARRYING COAL SEDIMENT ALONG WITH THE WATER. BECAUSE OF THIS SEDIMENT, THE WATER LEVEL IS SO HIGH THAT EVEN A SLIGHT RAINFALL CAUSES FLOODING. THIS HAS HAPPENED SO OFTEN THAT MR. LOWE'S GARDEN IS NOTHING BUT AIRLESS AND CAKED MUD -- LACKING NUTRIENTS AND BLACKENED BY COAL PARTICLES."

VOICE

ONE:

MR. LOWE LIVES IN HIS THIRD HOUSE; THE FIRST TWO WERE LOST IN FLOODS THAT RESULTED FROM STRIP MINING OPERATIONS. COAL COMPANY OFFICIALS TOLD LEWIS LOWE THE FLOODING WAS "THE LORD'S WORK". IT WAS A DEFENSE MR. LOWE DIDN'T ACCEPT -- AND HE'S TAKEN THE STRIP MINERS TO COURT, ASKING FOR TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS IN DAMAGES AND COMPENSATION. IN MR. MCCARTHY'S WORDS:

VOICE

TWO:

"LOWE IS A BELIEVER IN THE LORD, BUT HE KNOWS THAT BEFORE THE STRIP MINING COMPANIES CAME IN, HIS LAND WAS BLESSED WITH FERTILE SOIL. WHEN HE TOLD ME THAT HIS FARM HAD BEEN DETERIORATING FOR MORE THAN TEN YEARS, I ASKED WHY HE HAD WAITED A DECADE TO TAKE THE COAL OPERATORS TO COURT. MR. LOWE SAID HE NEEDED ALL THAT TIME TO FIND A LAWYER WILLING TO CHALLENGE THE COAL COMPANIES."



VOICE

ONE: LEWIS LOVE'S CASE IS STILL IN THE COURTS. HE DOESN'T KNOW WHEN THE JUDGE WILL GET TO IT, BUT OFFICIALS SAY IT WILL BE 'SOON'. ACCORDING TO MR. MCCARTHY, HOWEVER, HE MAY HAVE TO BE PATIENT. IT TOOK FOUR YEARS FOR THE STATE OF TENNESSEE TO RAISE THE PROPERTY TAX ON COAL COMPANIES. AND ALTHOUGH THE EFFORTS OF PEOPLE LIKE LEWIS LOVE HAVE BROUGHT SOME HOPE, MR. MCCARTHY DOUBTS THAT OUTSIDERS CARE AS MUCH ABOUT APPALACHIA AS THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE THERE.

VOICE

TWO: "IN 1971, RICHARD NIXON TOLD THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COUNCIL -- THE A-R-C, A FEDERAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT CREATED IN 1965 -- THAT IT WAS BEING PHASED OUT OF EXISTENCE. THE AGENCY SURVIVED ONLY BECAUSE FRIENDS IN CONGRESS RALLIED TO SAVE IT."

VOICE

ONE: MR. MCCARTHY SAYS CRITICS OF THE A-R-C CALL IT POLITICALLY CONTROLLED AND INSENSITIVE TO THE NEEDS OF CITIZENS IN MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES. BUT MR. MCCARTHY FEELS THAT THE A-R-C IS OFTEN BLAMED FOR AVOIDING WHAT IT WAS NEVER INTENDED TO GO NEAR.

VOICE

TWO: "THE WHITE HOUSE AND CONGRESS ONLY ALLOW THE A-R-C TO CHIP AWAY AT PROBLEMS THAT NEED TO BE BLASTED. THIRTEEN PERCENT OF APPALACHIA'S HOUSING IS SUBSTANDARD, AGAINST SEVEN PERCENT NATIONALLY. INCOMES ARE STILL SIXTY PERCENT OF THE NATIONAL AVERAGE. AND THE RATE OF INFANT DEATHS IN APPALACHIA IS ONE OF THE HIGHEST IN THE COUNTRY."

VOICE

ONE: DESPITE ALL THIS, MR. MCCARTHY WRITES, MOST POLITICIANS  
BOW TO THE COAL COMPANIES. WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS,  
CONGRESSMEN HAVE NOT PUSHED HARD FOR A TOTAL BAN ON STRIP  
MINING. BUT MR. MCCARTHY FEELS THAT THE PRESS MUST ALSO  
SHARE SOME OF THE BLAME FOR THE CONDITIONS IN APPALACHIA.  
HE CONCLUDES:

VOICE

TWO: "THE NATIONAL PRESS ISN'T POKING AROUND APPALACHIA THESE  
DAYS FOR HINTS OF 'THE NATIONAL MOOD'. APPALACHIA IS A  
BEAT COVERED MOSTLY BY SMALLER, INDEPENDENT PAPERS --  
VOICES RAISED TO SAY THAT PEOPLE SHOULD COME BEFORE SOME  
UNDEFINED NOTION OF 'PROGRESS'. BUT LITTLE EVIDENCE  
EXISTS THAT WASHINGTON OR THE REST OF THE COUNTRY WANTS  
TO HEAR THAT MESSAGE. IT IS ONLY ASSERTIONS FROM WITHIN  
THE APPALACHIAN COMMUNITY THAT HOLD PROMISE OF CREATING  
SOMETHING DIFFERENT OR BETTER."

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VOICE

ONE: THE IDEA BEHIND THE JURY IN THE AMERICAN LEGAL SYSTEM  
ASSUMES THAT JURORS WILL MAKE THEIR OWN IMPARTIAL  
JUDGMENTS -- JUDGMENTS BASED ON RELEVANT EVIDENCE PRESENTED  
IN THE COURTROOM. AND IT ASSUMES THEY WON'T BE AFFECTED  
BY ANYTHING ABOUT THE TRIAL THEY MIGHT READ IN THE  
NEWSPAPERS, SEE ON TELEVISION OR HEAR ON THE RADIO. BUT,  
IS THIS ASKING TOO MUCH? WELL, IT'S AN ISSUE WHICH HAS  
BEEN DEBATED FOR YEARS: WHETHER PRE-TRIAL PUBLICITY  
UNDERMINES A PERSON'S CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO A FAIR  
TRIAL. REPORTER DAN ROTTENBERG DISCUSSED THIS CONTROVERSY  
IN A RECENT ISSUE OF THE COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW.

VOICE

ONE: ACCORDING TO MR. ROTTENBERG, MOST JUDGES THINK THAT  
(CONT'D) PRE-TRIAL PUBLICITY DOES INFLUENCE A JURY.

VOICE

TWO: "THE SUPREME COURT SAID AS MUCH IN 1966 WHEN IT REVERSED THE OHIO MURDER CONVICTION OF DR. SAM SHEPPARD BECAUSE JURORS HAD READ PREJUDICIAL REPORTS IN THE CLEVELAND NEWSPAPERS. U-S SUPREME COURT JUSTICE HARRY BLACKMUN SAID THE SAME THING LAST FALL WHEN HE APPROVED THE POWER OF THE COURTS TO KEEP THE PRESS FROM REPORTING CERTAIN FACTS ABOUT A TRIAL, EVEN THOSE PRESENTED IN OPEN COURT. AND ACCORDING TO A 1970 STUDY, EIGHTY-SIX PERCENT OF AMERICAN JUDGES BELIEVE THAT PUBLICATION OF A DEFENDENT'S PRIOR CRIMINAL RECORD MIGHT PREVENT HIS GETTING A FAIR TRIAL."

VOICE  
ONE:

BUT NO ONE, MR. ROTTENBERG CLAIMS, HAS EVER BEEN ABLE TO SAY FOR CERTAIN JUST HOW PUBLICITY AFFECTS A JURY'S VERDICT. MOST JOURNALISTS SAY THE MEDIA SIMPLY DOESN'T HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF INFLUENCE ON THE JURORS. THEY CONTEND THAT JURIES ARE CAPABLE OF REACHING FAIR VERDICTS REGARDLESS OF WHAT APPEARS IN THE NEWS MEDIA. LAST YEAR, HOWEVER, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IN NEW YORK PUBLISHED RESULTS OF A STUDY WHICH CAME CLOSER THAN ANY PREVIOUS JURY EXPERIMENT TO CREATING REAL COURTROOM CONDITIONS. MR. ROTTENBERG DESCRIBES THE STUDY.

VOICE

TWO: "IT WAS CONDUCTED BY SOCIAL SCIENTIST ALICE PADAWER-SINGER. SHE SELECTED JURORS THE SAME WAY THEY'RE SELECTED IN A REAL COURT SITUATION. EACH OF HER JURIES -- THIRTY-THREE

VOICE  
TWO:  
(CONT'D)

GROUPS IN ALL -- SAT IN AN ACTUAL COURTROOM AND LISTENED TO A TAPE OF A REAL MURDER TRIAL. BUT BEFORE THEY HEARD THE TAPE, MS. PDAWER-SINGER GAVE HALF OF THE JURORS NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS WHICH SAID THE DEFENDENT HAD A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND AND THAT HE HAD RETRACTED HIS CONFESSION TO THE CRIME. SHE GAVE THE OTHER HALF OF THE JURORS CLIPPINGS WHICH SAID NOTHING ABOUT THE DEFENDENT. THEN THE JURORS HAD TWO DAYS TO LISTEN TO THE TRIAL AND DECIDE ON A VERDICT."

VOICE  
ONE:

MR. ROTTENBERG FINDS THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY SOMEWHAT DISTURBING FOR JOURNALISTS. EIGHTY PERCENT OF THE JURIES EXPOSED TO THE PREJUDICIAL CLIPPINGS REACHED VERDICTS OF GUILTY, BUT ONLY THIRTY-NINE PERCENT OF THOSE NOT EXPOSED TO SUCH INFORMATION FAVORED A GUILTY VERDICT. HOWEVER, MR. ROTTEBERG ADMITS THAT THE PDAWER-SINGER STUDY HAD ITS WEAK POINTS. THERE WAS NO TIME LAG, FOR EXAMPLE, BETWEEN THE READING OF THE NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND THE TRIAL, AS THERE WOULD BE IN A LIVE COURT SITUATION -- EVENTS WERE MORE CONCENTRATED.

ALSO, SOME OF THE JURIES DIDN'T EVEN FINISH THEIR DELIBERATIONS WITH A UNANIMOUS VOTE FOR GUILT OR ACQUITTAL. INSTEAD, THEY JUST RECORDED MAJORITY VOTES AT THE END OF THE DAY. BUT MR. ROTTENBERG WRITES THAT ACCORDING TO HUNDREDS OF STUDIES, THE JUROR'S FIRST BALLOT DECIDES THE FINAL VERDICT ANYWAY. HE QUOTES THE REACTIONS OF COLUMBIA LAW PROFESSOR MAURICE ROSENBERG -- AN EXPERT ON JURY BEHAVIOR -- TO MS. PDAWER-SINGER'S STUDY.

VOICE

TWO:

"WE'RE BOUND TO SAY THAT IT LOOKS AS IF JURORS, WHEN EXPOSED TO INFORMATION ABOUT RETRACTED CONFESSIONS OR PRIOR CRIMINAL RECORDS, ARE MORE PRONE TO FIND GUILT THAN JURORS WHO ARE NOT. THIS KIND OF PUBLICITY CAN BE DYNAMITE."

VOICE

ONE:

MS. PADAMER-SINGER SAYS SHE WOULD LIKE TO SEE FAIR-TRIAL REMEDIES WITHIN THE CRIMINAL-JUSTICE SYSTEM BUT SHE'S AGAINST PRESS CENSORSHIP. AND YET, MR. ROTTENBERG CONTENDS, HER STUDY COULD EASILY BE USED TO SUPPORT REHEMED EFFORTS TO RESTRAIN THE PRESS IN ITS CRIME REPORTING. IN HIS WORDS:

VOICE

TWO:

"TO THE EXTENT THAT THE PADAMER-SINGER STUDY MAY ENCOURAGE SUCH RESTRAINT, MEDIA SPOKESMEN SEE IT AS A DANGEROUS THING. BUT REPORTERS ARE PRIMARILY CONCERNED THAT ONCE THE COURTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO RESTRICT PRESS REPORTING, THEY WILL EXTEND THOSE RESTRICTIONS TO OTHER AREAS OF HUMAN COMMUNICATION. IN FACT, THEY ALREADY HAVE -- LAST FALL

IN CALIFORNIA A FEDERAL JUDGE BANNED THE SHOWING OF THE FILM MANSON IN HALF OF CALIFORNIA'S COUNTIES. THE FILM CONTAINS POSSIBLY PREJUDICIAL FOOTAGE ABOUT LYNETTE FROMME-- THE WOMAN ACCUSED OF TRYING TO ASSASSINATE PRESIDENT FORD. SINCE FROMME'S JURORS HADN'T BEEN CHOSEN YET, THE JUDGE DECIDED THAT THE BEST WAY TO GUARANTEE A FAIR TRIAL WAS NOT TO LET ANYONE SEE THE FILM."

VOICE

ONE: BUT BEYOND THE FREEDOM-OF-SPEECH ISSUE, MR. ROTTENBERG SUGGESTS THAT THE PRESS RE-EXAMINE ITS CRIME-COVERAGE PRACTICES. WHAT IS SO IMPORTANT, HE ASKS, ABOUT PUBLISHING NEWS OF A CONFESSION OR OF A DEFENDENT'S PRIOR CRIMINAL RECORD? MR. ROTTENBERG DOUBTS THE PRESSING NEED TO PUBLISH SUCH INFORMATION JUST BEFORE A TRIAL, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF MS. PADAWER-SINGER'S STUDY. BUT MANY JOURNALISTS DISMISS THE RESULTS OF HER EXPERIMENT AS INSIGNIFICANT. MR. ROTTENBERG QUOTES ONE OF HER CRITICS -- JAMES GOODAE, A VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE NEW YORK TIMES.

VOICE

TWO: "THAT'S ONE LABORATORY EXPERIMENT, BUT THERE'S SO MUCH EVIDENCE GOING THE OTHER WAY -- NOT EXPERIMENTS BUT REAL EVIDENCE. THERE ARE PLENTY OF CELEBRATED DEFENDANTS WHO HAVE BEEN ACQUITTED IN THE FACE OF WIDESPREAD PREJUDICIAL PUBLICITY -- JOHN MITCHELL, MAURICE STANS, JOHN CONNALLY -- TO NAME A FEW.

C  
P  
"IT'S NEVER BEEN OUR STANDARD IN THIS COUNTRY TO MAKE JUDGMENTS AS TO WHAT SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT BE PUBLISHED BASED ON ITS EFFECTS ON PEOPLE. ONCE YOU ACCEPT THAT PREMISE, IT SEEMS TO ME YOU HAVE ESTABLISHED A SYSTEM OF CENSORSHIP."

VOICE  
ONE:

T  
ONE POSSIBLE COMPROMISE BETWEEN THE COURT AND THE PRESS, NOTES MR. ROTTENBERG, IS A 1973 RULING STILL IN FORCE IN PENNSYLVANIA. THE PENNSYLVANIA SUPREME COURT DECISION FORBIDS PUBLIC OFFICIALS FROM DIVULGING CONFESSIONS AND PRIOR ARREST RECORDS. BUT IT ALSO LEAVES THE MEDIA  
↓ FREE TO PUBLISH WHATEVER THEY CAN GET THEIR HANDS ON.

VOICE  
ONE:  
(CONT'D)

THIS APPROACH RESPECTS BOTH THE U-S CONSTITUTION'S FIRST  
AMENDMENT RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND THE SIXTH  
AMENDMENT RIGHT TO A FAIR TRIAL. BUT WHATEVER THE  
MERITS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA RULING, MR. ROTTENBERG FEELS  
THERE'S A NEED FOR MORE RESEARCH ON HOW THE MEDIA AFFECTS  
JURORS.

MRS. PADAWER-SINGER WANTS TO CONTINUE HER EXPERIMENTS, BUT  
SHE'S HAD TROUBLE GETTING MONEY TO DO SO. SHE CLAIMS  
THAT PRESS ASSOCIATIONS AND LEGAL GROUPS ARE AFRAID TO  
FUND HER BECAUSE THEY'RE NERVOUS ABOUT WHAT SHE MIGHT  
FIND. REPORTER DAN ROTTENBERG CONCLUDES":

VOICE

TWO: "WHETHER OR NOT HER CONCERNS EXPLAIN HER FUNDING PROBLEMS  
THEY SUGGEST, IN TODAY'S JUDICIAL CLIMATE, THAT GREAT  
CARE BE EXERCISED IN WEIGHING CLAIMS ON BOTH SIDES OF  
THIS ISSUE. FOR THE OPENNESS OF OUR SOCIETY IS ALSO AT  
STAKE."

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VOICE

ONE: IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, IT HAS THINNED THE WATERLOGGED  
RANKS OF THE SURFING CROWD. IN NEW YORK, IT RIVALS  
STICKBALL AS THE MOST VISIBLE CITY PASTIME. AND IN THE  
MIDWEST, IT IS CAUSING PARENTS MORE ALARM THAN THEIR SON'S  
FIRST TIME OUT WITH THE CAR. IT'S THE REBIRTH  
OF AN OLD FAD: SKATEBOARDING. NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE REPORTS  
THAT IT'S BECOME A MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR INDUSTRY, A SPORT  
COMPLETE WITH ITS OWN RULES, CHAMPIONS AND DANGERS.

VOICE

TWO: "IN THE MID-1960'S, SKATEBOARDS WERE AS BIG -- AND AS BRIEF -- A FAD AS HULA-HOOPS. BUT A DIEHARD BAND OF CALIFORNIA FANS NEVER GAVE THEM UP. IN 1972 THEY DISCOVERED THAT URETHANE ROLLER SKATE WHEELS, FASTENED TO THE OLD BOARDS, GRIPPED THE PAVEMENT BETTER AND GAVE MORE FLEXIBILITY THAN THE ORIGINAL STEEL OR CLAY ONES. SINCE THEN, AT LEAST ONE HUNDRED FIFTY MANUFACTURERS HAVE TURNED OUT MORE THAN FIFTY MODELS."

VOICE

ONE: THIS TIME AROUND, NEWSWEEK SAYS, THE SKATEBOARDERS ARE JOINING THE RANKS OF SERIOUS ATHLETES. TWENTY-SIX CHAMPIONS RECENTLY COMPETED FOR SEVEN THOUSAND DOLLARS AT THE FIRST WORLD MASTERS INVITATIONAL IN NEW YORK. THE FIRST OPEN WORLD INVITATIONAL IN CALIFORNIA NEXT SEPTEMBER WILL OFFER FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS IN PRIZE MONEY. ACCORDING TO THE MAGAZINE:

VOICE

TWO: "AT SKATEBOARD COMPETITIONS, DAREDEVILS SPEED DOWN SLALOM COURSES, RACE ON FLAT TRACKS AND JUMP OVER BARRELS. IN THE FREESTYLE EVENT, SINGLES AND COUPLES DO FIGURE-SKATING ROUTINES AS WELL AS ACROBATIC BACKBENDS AND HANDSTANDS. COMMON AMATEUR STUNTS RANGE FROM TRICKS CALLED "NOSE WHEELIES" -- WEIGHT ON THE FRONT OF THE BOARD, BACK WHEELS OFF THE GROUND -- TO FEATS CALLED "360'S" -- TURNING THE BOARD IN A CIRCLE BY SHIFTING THE WEIGHT OF THE BODY."

VOICE

ONE: BUT SKATEBOARDING, NEWSWEEK WRITES, HAS CREATED SOME PROBLEMS ALONG WITH THE FUN AND PROFITS. WITH SIX TO TEN MILLION AMERICANS NOW TAKING TO THE BOARDS, THE NUMBER



VOICE

ONE: OF SKATEBOARD-RELATED INJURIES HAS SOARED. MOST OF THE  
(CONT'D)

(1) INJURIES ARE FAIRLY MINOR AND COMMON TO THE SPORT --

(1) SCRAPES, BRUISES, SPRAINED WRISTS AND ANKLES. THE NEVER

EQUIPMENT IS MUCH SAFER THAN THAT OF THE 1960'S, WHEN ONE  
IN FOUR SKATEBOARDERS GOT INJURED. BUT EVEN SO, THE  
MAGAZINE NOTES, THE POTENTIAL FOR HARM HAS ALARMED SOME  
COMMUNITIES. NEWSWEEK NOTES:

VOICE

TWO: "THE CITY COUNCILS IN SAN FRANCISCO AND SAN DIEGO HAVE  
BANNED SKATEBOARDING ON BUSY PUBLIC STREETS AND AFTER  
DARK. CAITON, MASSACHUSETTS HAS REINVOKED AN OLD CITY  
LAW AGAINST "COASTING ON THE STREETS," AND IN RYE, NEW  
YORK, SKATEBOARDS AREN'T ALLOWED AT ALL."

VOICE

ONE: NEWSWEEK WRITES THAT SKATEBOARD FANS THEMSELVES ARE  
BECOMING MORE SAFETY CONSCIOUS. SKATEBOARD ENTHUSIASTS  
ARE PUSHING FOR LAWS TO REQUIRE THE USE OF KNEE PADS,  
ELBOW PADS AND HELMETS. THEY'RE ALSO ASKING FOR  
SPECIAL SKATEBOARD PARKS. THE MAGAZINE QUOTES RUSS  
HOWELL, A PROFESSIONAL SKATER WHO'S ONLY TWENTY-SIX,  
BUT CALLS HIMSELF "THE GRANDDADDY OF SKATEBOARDING":

VOICE

TWO: "THE MOST DANGEROUS THING ABOUT SKATEBOARDING IS THAT  
MOST COMMUNITIES DON'T PROVIDE A SAFE AREA TO DO IT IN.  
IT'S A SHAME. I'D LIKE TO SEE SKATEBOARDING INTRODUCED  
INTO SCHOOL SYSTEMS. CONVENTIONAL SPORTS JUST AREN'T  
AROUSING KIDS' INTEREST ANYMORE."

VOICE  
ONE:

FOR SOME PEOPLE, NEWSWEEK CONCLUDES, SKATEBOARDS ARE SIMPLY A CHEAP MODE OF TRANSPORTATION. EVERY AIR FREIGHT COMPANY IN LOS ANGELES HAS HIRED TWO SKATEBOARDERS TO DELIVER SMALL PACKAGES. COLLEGE STUDENTS SHUTTLE BETWEEN CLASSES ON SKATEBOARDS. KIDS USE THEM TO DELIVER NEWSPAPERS. AND ONE MAILMAN IN NEW YORK TRADED HIS BICYCLE FOR A SKATEBOARD TO USE ON HIS DAILY ROUTE. AS SKATEBOARDER RUSS HOWELL OBSERVES "OLD SKATEBOARDERS NEVER DIE -- THEY JUST ROLL A LITTLE SLOWER."

ANNCR: YOU'VE BEEN LISTENING TO FROM THE MAGAZINE RACK, SUMMARIES OF ARTICLES ON TIMELY TOPICS FROM MAGAZINES PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES. TODAY YOU HEARD HOW PEOPLE IN APPALACHIA ARE TRYING TO PROTECT THEIR ENVIRONMENT AGAINST OVER-EXPLOITATION BY MINING COMPANIES, FROM THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY; A REPORT ON THE FREE-PRESS-FAIR-TRIAL ISSUE FROM THE COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW; AND, FROM NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE, THE STORY OF HOW SKATEBOARDING HAS BECOME A NATIONAL SPORT. NEXT WEEK (AT THIS TIME), MORE SELECTIONS FROM THE MAGAZINE RACK. YOUR REPORTER IS \_\_\_\_\_.

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WJL/RTD